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*One of many new exhibits at the TR Site.*

## The Site's Transformation Continues

Welcome to the first issue of *The Bullytin*! We hope that you enjoy the TR Inaugural Site newsletter's new look. This, of course, is just one of many exciting things happening at the Site in the last year. The Site has reinvented itself and jumped headfirst into the 21st century with a more dynamic and engaging presence. With the many changes taking place, it just wouldn't be right for our newsletter to be left behind.

Since reopening to the public in June 2009, the Site has informed and entertained more than 10,000 people with a dramatic, immersive tour experience that places visitors in the Wilcox home on the day of Roosevelt's inauguration. New interactive exhibits introduce visitors to TR's America and invite them to explore how his presidency impacted, and continues to affect, our nation. The newly launched TR Site Foundation website at [trsite.org](http://trsite.org) endeavors to continue this excitement online. Lastly, look at the fellow in the upper left corner of our masthead. That's the new logo for a new TR Site! We expect you'll be seeing lots more of him in the future. Visitor response to the Site's new look has been overwhelmingly positive, and Site attendance from July – December, 2009 has increased 29% over the same period in past years.

*The Bullytin* is one more way that the Site is working to update its image. We hope you enjoy our new look as much as we have enjoyed creating it!



*The Site from Delaware Avenue, showing the carriage house addition.*

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# Message from the President and Executive Director

## Education Takes Center Stage

With the successful completion of our major construction project last summer, the Site’s main focus now turns to its education initiative, “Transforming the Visitor Experience.” We are extremely pleased with the favorable reviews for our new tour and its engaging interactive components. This strong foundation provides a basis for expansion in many directions.

Additional initiatives now underway include: the development of new grade-specific school programs, with a fourth grade program premiering this spring; exciting ideas for our changing exhibit space – see information in this issue on an upcoming exhibit; and themed tours that explore interesting aspects of the Site including its architecture and permanent collection. Five issues that Roosevelt faced more than a century ago and which still challenge our nation today will provide the themes for extensive programming at all age levels. These issues, which are also highlighted in our new tour, encompass conservation, race, big business, urban poverty, and the United States’ role as a world power. We look forward to exploring these important themes over the next several years in collaboration with numerous community partners.

We recently received the wonderful news that Congresswoman Louise Slaughter was successful in securing a \$150,000

grant award to assist us in completing additional elements of our expanded tour experience. This grant will give us the resources to add an interactive globe to the “President’s Office” and a computer research desk to the “Exploration Room” – two components that have been on the drawing board awaiting funding. We are extremely grateful to Congresswoman Slaughter for her continued enthusiasm for our mission and for her ongoing support.

Finally, if you have not yet taken the new tour, we encourage you to plan a visit this winter. It is truly an experience like no other in Western New York. And after your visit, please spread the word to your family and friends. It is time for what was once one of Buffalo’s “best kept secrets” to take center stage!

**LAWRENCE D. SEYMOUR**  
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# TR and “Buffalo Bill” Cody

Many historians claim that Theodore Roosevelt and William F. “Buffalo Bill” Cody were close personal friends...but is that really the case? The TR Site will host a lecture exploring the personal, professional and public relationship between these two heroic Rough Riders on Thursday, February 25th at 5:30 p.m. Jeremy Johnston, a direct descendent of one of TR’s hunting guides, will present “Two Rough Riders: The Relationship Between “Buffalo Bill” Cody & Theodore Roosevelt.” An Assistant Professor of History at Northwest College in Powell, Wyoming, Johnston has written numerous articles about TR’s connection to Yellowstone National Park. He is currently conducting research in his role as Associate Editor of *The Papers of William F. “Buffalo Bill” Cody*. A reception will follow the lecture. Cost is **\$5 for TR Site members** and **\$7 for non-members**.



William “Buffalo Bill” Cody, c. 1907  
*Photo - Library of Congress*

## NYSCA Grant Supports New Education Program



With an all-new tour and exhibits injecting new vitality into the TR Site, it is essential that educational programming not be left behind. The Site is nearing the completion of a new elementary level program, “**Reporting History**,” which covers tour themes at an age appropriate level. This education program is made possible with public funds from the **New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA)**, a state agency.

During the course of their visit, students participating in “Reporting History” assume the role of reporters present at the Wilcox home on the day of President William McKinley’s death. They follow Vice-President Theodore Roosevelt through the home, culminating in his inauguration as President, decipher Morse code messages to TR from the nation, and hear citizens of the day express their hopes for TR’s presidency. As a post-visit activity, a class newspaper about the inauguration is produced. With an increased emphasis on TR and social issues of the day, this program, complete with pre-visit and post-visit materials, will strengthen curriculum links and mission relevance, providing increased benefits to schools and Site alike.

During the fall season, nearly 600 students visited the Site during a pilot testing period for the program, which was made possible through financial support of NYSCA and assistance from the Buffalo Public Schools. Evaluation is currently underway to put finishing touches on “Reporting History”, with sessions already scheduled for the spring. With Reporting History now receiving its polishing touches, the Site will be looking toward expanding its offerings for middle and high school students next.

## Coming soon to the TR Site’s new rotating exhibit gallery –

**From Protecting National  
Interests to Preserving National  
History: The Story of the  
Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural  
National Historic Site**

The exhibit will explore the changes that have been made to what is now the TR Site over the course of its 170+ year history. The westernmost section of the building was part of the Buffalo Barracks in the 1840s; it later became a private residence; it was then transformed into a noted Buffalo restaurant; and is now a National Historic Site.

Artifacts from each era of the building’s history will be on display, including archaeological material excavated as part of the recent Carriage House project.





Mark DePalma

## Introducing...

Even though **Mark J. DePalma** is one of the TR Site Foundation's newest trustees, elected in 2009, his involvement at the Site goes back to 1999 when he became a member and then chairman of the Site's Advisory Committee. Because of Mark's long abiding interest in and admiration for Theodore Roosevelt, supporting the Site is a natural for this talented young professional.

"When I was growing up, TR was someone who really jumped off the pages of history for me," Mark recalls.

"His boundless energy, spirit, determination and amazing accomplishments, have always been a source of inspiration for me."

Brought up in Western New York, Mark received a BS in Advertising and Marketing at Syracuse University and an MBA in Finance and Marketing at UB. As a senior marketing manager with twenty years of corporate experience, he brings important skills to the Site. Mark has served on the Site's Marketing Committee for many years, assisting on such projects as *Theodore Roosevelt: Icon of the American Century*, an exhibit that traveled to Buffalo from the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery, and the Pan-American Exposition centennial celebration. Most recently, Mark has assisted the Site on implementing marketing strategies for its grand reopening last June as well as the new logo and website. Now in development under Mark's leadership is a long-term marketing plan.

Mark's community involvement also includes service on the Board of Directors of WNED and the Eating Disorders Association of WNY, as well as marketing support for St. Bernadette Elementary School in Orchard Park. Mark and his wife, Jen, live in Hamburg with their three daughters.

## TR Site Receives Conservation Bookshelf

Treasured objects and artifacts held by the Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural Site Foundation will be preserved for future generations with help from the *IMLS Connecting to Collections Bookshelf*, a core set of conservation books and online resources donated by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). IMLS has now awarded almost 3,000 free sets of the IMLS Bookshelf, in cooperation with the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH).

"When IMLS launched this initiative to improve the dire state of our nation's collections, we understood that the materials gathered for the Bookshelf would serve as important tools for museums, libraries, and archives nationwide," said Anne-Imelda Radice, Director of IMLS. "We were both pleased and encouraged by the overwhelming interest of institutions prepared to answer the call to action, and we know that with their dedication, artifacts from our shared history will be preserved for future generations."

The TR Site was awarded this set of seventeen books and essential digital resources based on an application describing the needs and plans for the care of its collections. The IMLS Bookshelf focuses on collections typically found in art or history museums and in libraries' special collections. It addresses such topics as the philosophy and ethics of collecting, collections management and planning, emergency preparedness, and culturally specific conservation issues.

The IMLS Bookshelf is a crucial component of *Connecting to Collections: A Call to Action*, a conservation initiative that the Institute launched in 2006. IMLS began the initiative in response to a 2005 study it released in partnership with Heritage Preservation, *A Public Trust at Risk: The Heritage Health Index Report on the State of America's Collections*. The multi-faceted, multi-year initiative shines a nationwide spotlight on the needs of America's collections, especially those held by smaller institutions, which often lack the human and financial resources necessary to adequately care for their collections.

## Visitor Comments on the New TR Site!

- ★ "Bravo – a first class, world class attraction for Buffalo!"
- ★ "Many interactive exhibits the kids really liked. Would highly suggest this as something fun to do in Buffalo."
- ★ "Interesting and educational."
- ★ "I had so much fun...It was awesome!"
- ★ "We all thought the revamped tour was great. It reminded us in many ways of the quality generally seen at Disney World and other high end facilities."
- ★ "This tour brings alive the spirit of Buffalo."
- ★ "All of the interactive exhibits were attention grabbing, really informative, and make this a place to remember."
- ★ "My favorite Buffalo building."
- ★ "I was just president for the day! How cool!"
- ★ "The multi-media exhibit on the issues Roosevelt faced on taking office was one of the most engaging and powerful exhibits I've ever seen."
- ★ "Fascinating and thought provoking place."

# Victorian Christmas 2009

We did it - another record-breaking event! The final figures are in and we're delighted to report that Victorian Christmas 2009 was the most successful ever, raising more than \$43,000. It certainly was a banner year! It was truly exciting to unveil our wonderful new Carriage House and beautifully renovated Wilcox Mansion. Each day, old friends and new friends alike filled the Site with laughter and good will, enjoying an opportunity to take part in an old-fashioned holiday celebration. Special kudos to the Victorian Christmas committee, lead by chairs Diane Elmer and Mary Ellen Glynn, for the many hours of careful planning and special teamwork that made this such a stellar event. As always, we send a very special thanks to the Eighth District Federated Garden Clubs of New York State for their enthusiastic support of Victorian Christmas.

Finally, to the TR Site staff and all the volunteers, the biggest thank-you of all! Boundless energy and teamwork made the difference once again as we presented this special Western New York tradition. That warm, welcoming atmosphere that you present left our visitors with happy memories and a bit of the true spirit of Christmas. Congratulations to one and all for a superb job!

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Carol Hauser (r) and Marie Sajsa (l) along with co-chair Karen McKee quickly had the all new dining room service running smoothly. They proved to be quite adept at problem solving and quick thinking!



Jim Carlo, Director of Hospitality Management at Trocaire College, orchestrated the new wine pairing dinner to perfection. The stellar menu created by Jim and his students along with Bill Warren's outstanding wine selection brought a standing ovation from the very appreciative audience.

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